

Against the Grain

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Book Pricing Update

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Book Pricing Update

by *Celia Wagner* (Blackwell North America)

Librarians often inquire whether there are publishing "seasons" reflected in Blackwell's New Titles coverage — predictably heavy or light times. This question assumes particular importance whenever a library is expending its annual budget much more quickly, or much more slowly, than anticipated.

We looked back into the Blackwell New Titles database and asked what percentage of each year's total coverage occurred in each quarter. Following are a chart, and a graph, illustrating the percentage of titles covered in each quarter of the past six fiscal years. We chose the most

common library fiscal year, July through June, as our standard.

As the graph demonstrates, the line throughout the course of all six years was relatively smooth. There were no terribly "big" seasons. The

and in five out of six years, spring was the largest quarter for coverage.

At mid-year, the percentage of titles treated has varied from 48% to 52% — right around the half-way

mark. We know there are variations in publishing output from week to week, and possibly even from month to month. But libraries finding themselves signifi-

Cumulated Percentages of Titles per Quarter 1984 to 1989

	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989
Summer	24%	23%	22%	22%	22%	25%
Fall	50%	48%	48%	49%	52%	46%
Winter	73%	71%	71%	72%	73%	73%
Spring	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

summer and winter quarters tended to be lower than average, while spring and fall tended to be higher. The percentage of titles covered in the spring quarter, April through June, was always more than 25%,

cantly under- or over-spent at the midpoint of the fiscal year need to institute compensatory profile revisions, rather than hoping for a seasonal surge, or lull, to even out expenditures. 🐘

And They Were There

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Bibliographic Services at Arizona State West, described the growth of this satellite campus and its current dilemmas. Marion Reid, Interim Director of the not-yet-built library of the new San Marcos California State University, revealed the surprises and rewards of starting with no office, no staff, and being involved in the earliest planning of a new campus library.

Henry Yapple, director at Whitman College, had everyone

laughing about the alliance and tension between acquisitions and collection development. Bill Fisher, Associate Professor at San Jose State University, described the need for, and current dearth of, formal training in acquisitions today. And Frank D'Andraia, from UC Riverside, provided "The Last Round-Up."

Rarely have I attended a meeting where so much experience was exchanged so candidly. All participants—directors, department heads, staff, and vendors—set aside

their roles and positions, openly talked and freely laughed, joked, and played amidst the serious presentations and discussions. We all thanked Tom Leonhardt who hosted and organized this convivial event. Tom plans in 1991 to hold the Second Annual "Acquisitions in the West" conference next spring. Plan now to attend this adventure!! 🐘

